United Nations A/55/6 (Prog. 1)

General Assembly

Distr.: General
4 April 2000

Original: English

Fifty-fifth session
Item 120 of the preliminary list*
Programme planning

Proposed medium-term plan for the period 2002-2005

Programme 1
Political affairs

Contents

	Page
Overall orientation	2
Subprogramme 1. Prevention, control and resolution of conflicts	2
Subprogramme 2. Electoral assistance	3
Subprogramme 3. Security Council affairs	3
Subprogramme 4 Decolonization	4
Subprogramme 5. Question of Palestine	5
Legislative mandates	6

* A/55/50.

00-36499 (E) 190400

Overall orientation

1.1 The overall purpose of the programme is to provide political support in respect of the Organization's global responsibility under the Charter of the United Nations in the areas of preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and post-conflict peace-building. The direction of the programme is provided in resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council, which has the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. Resolutions of particular relevance include Assembly resolution 47/120 A of 18 December 1992, entitled "An Agenda for Peace: preventive diplomacy and related matters", and 47/120 B of 20 September 1993, entitled "An Agenda for Peace". Within the Secretariat, substantive responsibility for the programme is vested in the Department of Political Affairs.

1.2 The strategy in meeting the programme's objectives is designed around five subprogrammes and is based on the development of a more efficient mechanism for conflict prevention and resolution. The activities to be implemented relate to early warning, preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and post-conflict peace-building, electoral assistance and provision of substantive support to policy-making organs, such as the Security Council and its subsidiary bodies, the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. These activities constitute the core functions of the Department of Political Affairs and together represent interdependent and complementary components of a comprehensive conflict-prevention, conflict-management and peace-building approach.

1.3 Special attention will also be given to incorporating a gender perspective into the work of this programme, in accordance with relevant resolutions of the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly.

Subprogramme 1
Prevention, control and resolution of conflicts

Objective

1.4 The objective of this subprogramme is to prevent, control and resolve conflicts through peaceful means as well as to promote a more cohesive and integrated response by the United Nations system in addressing post-conflict peace-building challenges facing countries emerging from crisis.

Strategy

1.5 Within the Department of Political Affairs, the substantive responsibility for this subprogramme is vested in the regional divisions, assisted by the Policy Planning Unit. Political developments relevant to international peace and security worldwide will be monitored and assessed for the purpose of identifying options and formulating recommendations on the role that the United Nations may be called upon to play in the prevention, control and resolution of conflicts as well as in the area of post-conflict peace-building activities. To this end, information collection, analysis and early warning activities with respect to potential and actual threats to international peace and security will be undertaken and utilized to enhance the capacity of the Secretariat, Member States and intergovernmental organizations, especially regional organizations with which the United Nations cooperates, including under Chapter VIII of the Charter, in their efforts to ensure the maintenance of international peace and security. Pursuant to decisions of the General Assembly and/or the Security Council, and with the agreement of the Member States concerned, action will be taken to organize, direct and execute special political missions as and when necessary.

Expected accomplishment

1.6 An expected accomplishment would be improved capability of the international community in the prevention, control and resolution of conflicts through preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and post-conflict peace-building activities.

Indicators of achievement

1.7 Indicators of achievement would include identification of the potential, new and ongoing conflicts addressed and/or settled through peaceful means and an increase in the level of post-conflict peace-building activities.

Subprogramme 2
Electoral assistance

Objective

1.8 The objective of this subprogramme is to facilitate democratic processes and the conduct of periodic and genuine elections.

Strategy

1.9 Within the Department of Political Affairs, the substantive responsibility for this subprogramme is vested in the Electoral Assistance Division. The General Assembly, acknowledging that United Nations electoral assistance has facilitated the holding of successful elections in several Member States, has encouraged the Secretary-General to respond to the evolving nature of requests for assistance and the growing need for specific types of medium-term expert assistance aimed at supporting and strengthening the existing capacity of requesting Governments, in particular through enhancing the capacity of national electoral institutions. The subprogramme will be implemented through the provision of technical advice, including training, upon request by Member States, on the democratization process, electoral laws, election organization and administration, as well as the strengthening of national electoral institutions. In addition guidelines, training materials and technical papers will be prepared. The Division will undertake needs assessments, formulate projects and establish partnerships with intergovernmental expert bodies, regional associations of electoral bodies, regional organizations and organizations of the United Nations system to ensure more comprehensive and needs-specific responses to requests for electoral assistance.

Expected accomplishment

1.10 The technical capacity of Member States seeking assistance for the conduct of elections would be enhanced to the level of internationally accepted standards.

Indicator of achievement

1.11 An indicator of achievement would be the number of internationally accepted elections conducted by new and restored democracies with the assistance of the United Nations.

Subprogramme 3
Security Council affairs

Objective

1.12 The primary objective of this subprogramme is to ensure the effective operation of the Security Council and its subsidiary organs.

Strategy

1.13 Within the Department, the responsibility for this subprogramme is vested in the Security Council Affairs Division, which will provide support to the Security Council and its subsidiary organs, in particular the sanctions committees, fact-finding missions and informal working groups, and to the Military Staff Committee. Substantive support will take the form of provision of advice in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the Council's decisions and past practice; research and analysis; preparation of reports; follow-up of the implementation of the Council's decisions; the timely issuance of parliamentary documentation and communications in accordance with the relevant decisions of the Council and its programme of work; liaison with presiding officers and members; and effective coordination of the meetings of the Council and its consultations and of meetings of subsidiary organs and working groups. Substantive support will also include research and analysis in connection with the implementation and effectiveness of mandatory measures or sanctions imposed by the Council and their possible undesirable effects on target and third countries. The evolution of the concept of "smart" sanctions, including the use and implementation of targeted financial sanctions, arms embargoes, travel bans and other similar measures will continue to be addressed. Work will also continue to be undertaken on the constitutional and procedural issues related to the interpretation and application of the Charter and the Security Council's provisional rules of procedure for the *Répertoire of the Practice of the Security Council* and on the relevant Articles of the

Charter for the *Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs*.

Expected accomplishment

1.14 Decision-making by the Security Council would be facilitated through effective substantive services and support.

Indicator of achievement

1.15 An indicator of achievement would be the degree of satisfaction expressed by members of the Security Council in the services provided by the Secretariat.

Subprogramme 4
Decolonization

Objective

1.16 The objective of the subprogramme is to promote the decolonization process in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and relevant resolutions of the General Assembly for the 17 remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories so as to bring about the complete eradication of colonialism.

1.17 Another objective is to strengthen the dissemination of information on decolonization in order to mobilize world opinion and to ensure the provision of assistance by the specialized agencies and institutions associated with the United Nations to the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories.

Strategy

1.18 The Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples will continue to examine the application of the Declaration and to seek suitable means for its immediate and full implementation in all Territories that have not yet exercised their rights in accordance with the Charter and relevant resolutions of the General Assembly. It will formulate specific proposals to this effect, examine compliance with the Declaration and other resolutions, formulate specific proposals for the elimination of the remaining manifestations of colonialism and report thereon to the Assembly, and enlist worldwide support for decolonization. The Special Committee will continue to dispatch visiting missions periodically to colonial Territories, in consultation with the administering Powers, to enable the Special Committee to obtain first-hand information on conditions in those Territories; examine the views, expressed orally or in writing, of peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, and also the views of the representatives of non-governmental organizations and individuals with a knowledge of conditions in those Territories; and assist the Assembly in making arrangements, in cooperation with the administering Powers, to secure a United Nations presence in the Non-Self-Governing Territories to observe or supervise the final stages of the process of decolonization.

1.19 In supporting the Special Committee in the implementation of its mandate, the Decolonization Unit of the Department of Political Affairs will provide substantive services to the Special Committee and its visiting and other missions as well as to the General Assembly when they review issues relating to decolonization; undertake research, analytical studies and reports on conditions in the Territories; provide assistance to the Special Committee in the preparation of its reports to the Assembly; collect, review and disseminate basic material, studies and articles relating to decolonization; promote flows of assistance from specialized agencies and institutions associated with the United Nations to the people in the Non-Self-Governing Territories; and promote, in cooperation with the Department of Public Information, a publicity campaign on decolonization. Subject to the relevant decisions of the Special Committee, this will entail organizing panel discussions and seminars, producing and disseminating publications, organizing exhibits and coordinating international activities aimed at the elimination of colonialism, including maintaining liaison with international organizations and individuals concerned with the problems of decolonization.

1.20 The Department of Political Affairs will also carry out research and prepare analytical studies on the application and interpretation of the relevant articles of the Charter related to activities of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, their subsidiary organs and ad hoc bodies and the Trusteeship Council in the areas of trusteeship and decolonization for inclusion in the *Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs*.

Expected accomplishment

1.21 An accomplishment by the end of the plan period would be the exercise of the right to self-determination by the peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions.

Indicator of achievement

1.22 An indicator of achievement would be the number of Non-Self-Governing Territories that had exercised their right to self-determination, including independence, in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions.

Subprogramme 5
Question of Palestine

Objective

1.23 The objective of the subprogramme is to enable the Palestinian people to exercise their inalienable rights.

Strategy

1.24 Within the Department, the substantive responsibility for implementing the subprogramme is vested in the Division for Palestinian Rights. The question of Palestine was first considered by the General Assembly in 1947. By its resolution 3376 (XXX) of 10 November 1975, the Assembly established the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. Substantive and technical support will be provided to the Committee in its deliberations and its annual programmes of work. Assistance will also be provided to the Committee in promoting a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the question of Palestine in accordance with all relevant United Nations resolutions as well as the full and effective implementation of the Israeli-Palestinian peace agreements. Assistance will also be provided to the Committee in mobilizing international support and assistance for the Palestinian people. The peace process is expected to result in a negotiated settlement of all outstanding issues. Supportive action by the United Nations will continue until all aspects of the question of Palestine are resolved in a satisfactory manner in accordance with international legitimacy. Under the auspices of the Committee, thematic international meetings and conferences will be convened to increase awareness of the question of Palestine and to promote dialogue among the parties concerned, including Governments, intergovernmental organizations, United Nations bodies, non-governmental organizations and representatives of civil society. In addition, and for the same purposes, informational materials on the question of Palestine will be developed and updated under the guidance of the Committee, including through the United Nations information system on the question of Palestine and its Internet sites.

Expected accomplishment

1.25 Through the work of the Division, the Committee would be enabled to generate heightened international awareness of the question of Palestine, as well as international support for and consensus on the question of Palestine.

Indicator of achievement

1.26 An indicator of achievement would be an increase in the level of support from the international community for the subprogramme's objectives.

Legislative mandates

Subprogramme 1
Prevention, control and resolution of conflicts

Charter of the United Nations, in particular Article 99

General Assembly resolutions

47/120 A	An Agenda for Peace: preventive diplomacy and related matters
47/120 B	An Agenda for Peace
52/12 A and B	Renewing the United Nations: a programme for reform
53/9	Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of American States
53/17	Cooperation between the United Nations and the Caribbean Community
54/7	Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference
54/9	Cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States
54/12	Cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union
54/35	Zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic
54/94	Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity
54/117	Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
54/186	Situation of human rights in Myanmar
54/227	Cooperation between the United Nations and the Southern African Development Community

Security Council resolutions on mandates established by the Council for questions relating to the maintenance of international peace and security

Subprogramme 2
Electoral assistance

General Assembly resolution

54/173	Strengthening the role of the United Nations in enhancing the effectiveness of the principle of periodic and genuine elections and the promotion of democratization

Subprogramme 3
Security Council affairs

Charter of the United Nations, in particular Articles 1, 7, 24 and 29

Security Council resolutions and decisions pertaining to the establishment and mandates of the subsidiary organs created by the Council under the terms of Article 29 of the Charter of the United Nations

Subprogramme 4
Decolonization

1514 (XV)	Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples
1654 (XVI)	The situation with regard to the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples
2621 (XXV)	Programme of action for the full implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples
51/209	Report of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization
52/161	Report of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization
52/220	Questions relating to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999
54/83	Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73*e* of the Charter of the United Nations
54/84	Economic and other activities which affect the interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories
54/85	Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations
54/86	Offers by Member States of study and training facilities for inhabitants of Non-Self-Governing Territories
54/91	Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples
54/92	Dissemination of information on decolonization

Subprogramme 5
Question of Palestine

General Assembly resolutions

54/39	Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People
54/40	Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat
54/41	Special information programme on the question of Palestine of the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat
54/42	Peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine